

**BEAUTY AND THE CITY**

**FINAL PROJECT**

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirement of the Degree of  
Sarjana Sastra



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**ENGLISH LITERATURE STUDY PROGRAM**

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**UNIVERSITAS KRISTEN SATYA WACANA**

**SALATIGA**

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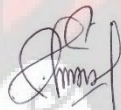
# BEAUTY AND THE CITY

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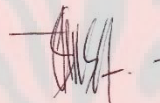
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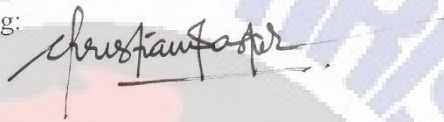
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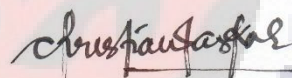
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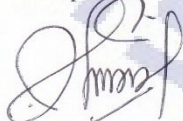
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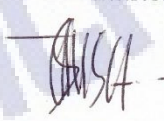
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### Summary of the Story

When Arimbi was a seventeen-year old girl, she was very ignorant when it comes to beauty since her mother looked like a beauty and fashion police by commenting what she wore, and how she looked. Yet, one day, when she saw that there was a pimple came right between her eyebrows, she was confused and frightened at the same time. She, who used to beautify herself with Johnson and Johnson, started to realize that her mother, who gave her advice on beauty, was true.

Year after year, she transformed and became a famous model in Jakarta. She lived in an apartment with her two neighbors who were worried about their appearance. Citrani, a fashion designer, was a thirty-five year old woman who was afraid of her wrinkles. Those wrinkles made her afraid since she thought that if those wrinkles were not diminished, she would look like a grandma in front of her male model, which was ten years younger than her. Meanwhile, Rahmi, also known as Aimee, was frustrated and committed to do a *revenge* to her ex-boyfriend, Danendra—a chef. He cheated Aimee by dating with a slender woman. It turns out; Arimbi suddenly felt that her breast and her lips are not perfect.

When Arimbi finds that the way they beautify themselves was very extreme and knowing Rani's presence made the situation became more turbid, then was Arimbi able to save herself and make her neighbors realized that they are in a condition called 'misunderstanding'?



## Beauty and the City

“Done!” said the *Eyeshadow*’s senior photographer, Mike Ma.

All crews sighed a relieved feeling: the costume provider, the make-up artists, the hair stylists, and the fashion editor. Finally, they had done the crucial thing to the magazine: the cover photo session.

Mike then came to me, shook my hands, and smiled to me; expressing his amazement on me. When I saw his extremely white teeth on his smile, I thanked God as I had made a teeth-bleaching appointment so that I would not blame myself about the yellow stain on my teeth at the end of this photo session, as last night I drank a cup of espresso.

“You’re so amazing, Darling! You’ve made me remember my personal reason choosing you as the winner of *Wajah Eyeshadow*,” he said cheerfully.

“Oh, Mike, come on! I was just doing the right thing, which is being responsible with what I have,” I replied his amazement.

“At least, I don’t take a shot of a dull doll.”

Then, we chuckled. Suddenly, Madonna’s “Vogue” was ringing from his iPhone in his brown chino trousers. He showed a pouted face at first and took that phone from the trousers. When he saw the person who phoned him, he smiled and his soul suddenly changed to be like a teenage girl who was extremely happy when her boyfriend called.

“I’m sorry, Darling. Olivier calls, me,” he asked for a permission.

“That’s okay. Go ahead and have fun!” I said with my head tilted.

He went to the door, leaned his body on the wall, and had a call with Olivier, his boyfriend with a very spoiled voice. I sighed, then I smiled. I stood up and walked to the make-up room. The make-up room was just across the photo studio, right behind the brown door. Right after my black Prada shoes was laid next to that brown door, I opened it.

There, I saw a classy and glamorous room: two closets on the left and the right side of the counter. The mirror was surrounded by light bulbs. I sat on the right chair in front of it. I, who was in the gorgeous Rizalman Ibrahim’s baju kurung<sup>1</sup> collection for Zalora<sup>2</sup> with the iconic red and blue Cirebon’s batik *mega mendung*, suddenly thrown into a time called ‘before being glamorous’.



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<sup>1</sup> Malay traditional cloth.

<sup>2</sup> Name of an online shop.

That mirror threw me into my seventeen year-old time, when I struggled to face my life crisis called ‘mother knows best’, which is what Mother Gothel always said to Rapunzel in Disney’s “Tangled”. Let me tell you about Momma.

Momma was exactly an alarm which frequently rang to remind me that pouring a blush of make-up is important for me since I was seventeen-year old girl, although the way she said things was like Clint Eastwood, the man who never raised his voice whenever he said something yet he has a power to make me listen to her words. It was because StarWorld’s Miss Universe, HBO’s “Sex and the City”, and her favorite monthly fashion magazine named Eyeshadow. Those things turned her into someone who was enthusiastically happy every time she watched or read her favorite things. To her, how you look was a big matter. Once, I asked her on why beauty was a big matter when I accompanied her watching 2008 Miss Universe on Star World.

She answered, “Dear, beauty is your main weapon to conquer this world.”

She raised her eyebrows, ogled her eyes, then raised her head as the sign of showing the proof of her answer. “Dear, look at those gorgeous girls. They have a magical crown that they will be proud of in their life named beauty. With beauty, you can get a job and maintain your career. You should watch and learn from them that perfection will change your fate. Remember this, in the world which needs perfection to conquer, the most perfect one will win.”

Right after Momma uttered that mantra, a thought provoked my mind. Directly, my mind commanded my mouth to utter what I thought.

“Will they feel scared when wrinkles suddenly come to them and slowly it would make the crown corroded and diminished?” I said after I ate my biscuit and drank the tea.

“Well, wrinkles are not a big matter,” she said again with the same voice and volume—without any tones raised—knowing what I was thinking. Then, she got up from the sofa and went away from the family room to check whether the dinner was ready to serve for us two.

That mantra was tingling and turning around my mind. At first, I felt annoyed with it. It was because that Momma emphasized more on how I should look in front of people.

The reality was, my friend would never comment on my appearance, either my face looked shiny (I think it would never happen!) or dull (This happened frequently!). I didn’t take that as a big matter because I believed that love would come to me without looking on how shiny your face and aura were—if a man came to me and hoped me that I can be his. If it came to money and career, I thought the perfect formulae on successfulness was all about hard work, determination, and positive attitude.

Am I a cashier that should smile as the sign of hospitality to the customer and poured a thick powder on my face in order to keep my good career reputation? I tried to formulate what I should said to Momma regarding that it was not a big matter for me.

“Mom, even my mates will never think that it is a big matter,” I said when we were in the dining room, having a dinner. “I think we should be grateful with what we have and I think beauty definition is something relative for everyone. Do we have an exact definition or a measurement tool to know how beautiful we are?”

Momma then drank her water and said, “Well, you should let yourself involved in the experience on a so-called beauty journey. Every woman has her very own experience on how you should be beautiful. Yet, what you must remember is that you are a seventeen-year old girl now. Your seventeen determines everything!”

In the real life, what happened in my seventeen was a life with no ups and downs. Or, I could say that I have the calmest life ever. Chit-chatting at school. Doing window-shopping at mall. And, again, they didn’t comment me that much. I had a radar or censor to send me a feeling called uncomfortable whenever I feel awkward of my appearance. I cut my hair in order to make myself comfortable, as well as adapting with this tropical land. Therefore, ...

... Momma, I would just say, whatev.

Although I decided to be that whatev, my ears started to feel uncomfortable with her noise, reminding me here and there, on how I should look.

“Ari, why do you look like this?” she said when I only use a white t-shirt covered with cardigan made of jeans, torn jeans, and a brown hat with a curvy letter that written ‘Wrangler’ on it. “I’m afraid that people will think that you are not treated well! Now, go beautify yourself. Use mine, not that Johnson and Johnson!” That means, I had to use Momma’s Elizabeth Arden lipstick, Maybelline mascara, the foundation cream, and the compact powder!

Imagining that those liquids and solids which would be put in my face was an infuriating thing for me because my face was extremely not a canvas that you could decorate like what you wanted! What was more than that was that I hated her on this regulation: no make-up, no exit permit. Until one day, I myself not giving myself that exit permit for I wanted to go with my friends doing our window-shopping.

I had finished taking a bath. I dried myself with a yellow towel then made a bun on my hair with it, then wore a blue bathrobe, opened the door, rubbing my feet on the bathroom’s door mat, and finally walked to my bedroom which was located on the left side of the bathroom. Momma, who was watching HBO’s “Sex and the City” threatened me with that regulation.

“Make sure that you’ve put the make-up. Unless, there—“



“I know it, Momma. No exit permit.” I smiled and emphasized that rule.

It was awful when I felt something chained put on my feet. It was like a prisoner whose life was not free because I must follow and obey that rules in order to make myself free from doing something. Hope after I sighed, I felt relieved for a while. Then, I came to my bedroom.

In my bedroom, I took off my bathrobe and the bun I’d made from the yellow towel followed by walking to the closet right beside my mirror to find the cloth that I wanted to wear: rose-colored t-shirt and a jeans. After I got those clothes, I put them on my bed located in front of the mirror and wore them. Now, I wanted to do what I did when Momma scolded me due to the cardigan-jeans-and-cap outfit: patting the compact powder and touching the lipstick on my lips. Yet, ... *Ahmigawd!* What is this?

There was a little cone right between my eyebrows! That little cone was red and yellow. It was throbbing and it was not the usual one. That throb teased my hands to burst and diminish that annoying little cone. Although it made me look like a Hindi woman, it really disturbed me! I would better have myself rubbed with the real Hindi person to have that circle rather than having this annoying thing, which made you look like the same one but it made you infuriated! No wonder I felt something mounded between my eyebrows when I rubbed the facial foam on my face!

Talking about this mounded thing, I remembered what Bex told about this mounded thing. Bex was my friend in senior high school who was a polytheist by having two gods in her life: Jesus and Anna Wintour, the editor in chief of the internationally known fashion magazine, Vogue. Bex said that whenever you came back from somewhere, you should wash your face and it should be done regularly.

“Unless, you want your face quite similar like a full moon,” she said. “A face which is like a full moon doesn’t have any at all.”

“What’s a full moon?” I asked.

“It was my connotation for a face which is full of acne,” she said. Then, I imagined on a face, which was full of acne. It was an *eww* when you have many cystic acne on your face!

I should diminish this! If I did not do it, I would spend my window-shopping not for shop-ping, but make my mind answer this question: How could I diminish this acne. And, it would take days and nights to find the answer. Well, hell yeah hygienic considerations! What I had to do now was to burst this acne. I gathered all my physical power and mental power to clean out this disgusting liquid that might come to the mirror.

I’m ready!

Three...

Two...

One...!

Aaarrggghhh!

“Arimbi, are you okay, Dear?” Momma asked.

I heard she walked to my bedroom, leaving Carrie Bradshaw, Samantha Jones, Miranda Hobbes, and Charlotte York behind. She opened the door and seeing my mirror was full of yellow and disgusting liquid bursted mixed with blood right between my face. Momma then put her fatless hands on her lean and fatless hips and said, “Although that was not the right way to deal with an acne, did you learn something from this?”

I nodded with all my consciousness.



That was it. Whenever I saw mirrors, that was the thing always happened. I would fly to that ridiculous memories which made me know that it was important to make yourself perfect in every situation. People would see you, not by the abstracts. Suddenly, ...

“Miss Ari?” said someone softly. My memory was blurred and diminished quickly. Besides that, I felt that someone touched my shoulder. Quickly I shook my head and looked at my left and right. Soleram, Eyeshadow’s make-up artist, and Suriram, Eyeshadow’s costume provider, spoke to me.

“Oh..., yes?” I answered and gathered all my soul to make myself realized that I was still in the reality.

“Thank you for being our cover for next month’s edition,” said Soleram, who wore black t-shirt and a jeans with her hair made like a bun at the top of her head.

“Our editor in-chief, Almira Alisjahbana, was very happy to know that this photo session was done smoothly and the result was outstanding. She has texted Rizalman Ibrahim and sent him the photo shoot. Rizalman said that since the photo result was outstanding, he gives this *baju kurung* for you,” Suriram who was in white t-shirt and jeans chimed in.

Knowing that I was very happy to get one of my clothes that I dreamed of, although I could only smiling, I was very happy to have Rizalman Ibrahim’s collection! I stood up from the chair, jumped, and hugged Suri and Sol cheerfully. I decided to wear this *baju kurung* along my way to my apartment. Maybe, I should shout, “I feel free!”



It only took ten minutes from Eyeshadow's office to my apartment on foot. I decided to have myself walked. Besides I made myself healthier, I also contributed enough in reducing the long-term effect of global warming and helped the Ministry of Environment, maybe. Or else, I contributed enough in reducing traffic jam in Jakarta, this megapolitan city.

By the way, that was not the main point. The main point was, I could show what I'd got: Rizalman Ibrahim's baju kurung. Really, it was one of the dresses that I'd been wanted for. I couldn't believe that I was able to get this gratis! Therefore, the conclusion was what Momma said was not that disturbing.

I arrived in my apartment. It was a two-storey building which had a small fence, both in the left side and the right side of the building. The Dutch architecture of the building was still obvious in this building, especially the window that was made of teak. I walked straight and stepped into the two-steps, which led me to the main door, which was covered with a canopy with a turquoise fabric on it. My room was on the first floor, exactly on the left side. I unzipped my Prada bag, found the key to unlock the door, and opened it.

Concealer...

Blush-on...

Lipstick...

There it was! I unlocked the door and opened it.

Surprisingly, ...

"Ola!" that thin, slim, and fair complexion woman named Citrani, I regularly called her Rani, gave me a hollo.

"Champagne?" that plump and fair woman named Rahmi, I regularly called her Aimee, showed her with the two empty champagne glasses.

"A promise means a debt!" said Rani and Aimee together. I remembered that I would spend my whole afternoon in my room with them, my mates slash my place where I was able to pour what I felt slash my counselee when it came to beauty stuff. Finally, I could step my feet in my room which was arranged tidily with fuchsia and white. Aimee went back to her room taking those cupcakes for meal. While Rani and I waited for her, we laid ourselves down on my king-sized bed with a white bedcover and fuchsia blanket. Rani looked at me and shocked on what I wore.



“Rizalman Ibrahim’s for Zalora?” she shouted enthusiastically and then we sat for a while. “Honey, *where* and *how*?”

“The first one, in Eyeshadow’s office. The second one: Rizalman said that my photo shoot was excellent, so, directly, he said to Almira that he gave this baju for me,” I showed the *baju kurung*.

“*Ahmigawd*. I envy you! Along my career as a fashion designer, I never get a free dress or a friend who is willing to give me his or her dress to be wear,” she laughed and then laid herself down again. It was so beautiful to see her with a floral-print sackdress and a statement necklace shaped like a collar. It was gold and it was carved with a flowery embroidery.

“Come on. I also envy at you. Your statement necklace was just gorgeous!” I said to her, giving my compliment. How on earth she could adapt the statement necklace with her floral-print sackdress which didn’t have any collar on it?

“Hey, it’s nothing!” she touched her statement necklace. “It is just an accessory that I have to use smartly!”

It was so sudden that the door was opened. Then, a soprano followed. “I’m coming with the cupcake!” That was Aimee.

“Thanks,” we, Rani and I, answered.

Aimee put the cupcakes on a table made of teak on the left side of the room. She took the champagne glass from that table and gave it to us. Then, she came back again to take the champagne. We decided to line ourselves up on my bed. She asked us to move ourselves a bit because she had a bit big butt in the world. Right between me and Rani, there was a black remote—television remote. I took it and turned on the TV. It portrayed Asian Food Channel. That food channel was broadcasting the thirty-minute Farah Quinn’s debut show on Trans TV since 2008, “Ala Chef”.

I did not look on what she cooked. I looked and adored her god-damn exotic building, cooking on a golf meadow with a pond behind her. Not only her exotic building, I also adored her ripe breast. Then, I looked at my breast for a while, and then looked again on Farah Quinn’s.

“Oh, God! Why do ‘envy’ should be in each megapolitan woman’s feeling?” Rani said when she looked at me looking my boobs and compared it to Farah Quinn’s.

“I’m not envy. I’m just checking whether my breasts are as big as hers! You know, big boobs are the sign of modern women, because modern women knew how to conquer the world, which is to treat herself well!”

“Then, if I treat myself well, am I still able to maintain my relationship with Dan?” Aimee uttered her question. “You guys should watch your mouth when you say something!”

Silence for a while.

“Aimee, are you okay?” I asked her.

“I’m not that okay, Guys. Please. Don’t ever talk to me about treating myself well because I still believe that you cannot start to in orderly give up when you realize that your girlfriend was not that Farah Quinn!”

“Well, I’m sorry to hear that...” Rani hugged Aimee. “We do apologize because those words were unintentionally uttered.”

“I’m so sorry that I’m unable enough to control my emotion,” Aimee said that with a flat expression and sighed her breath heavily. “But, I still cannot believe that Dan was that dare to do it. Now, I know what his intention to make me come to the gym was, joining a weight-loss program; even he will pay for that. It was only for his pride, because I saw him in a restaurant with a slender girl!”

“Slender girls are in, open any magazine,” I motivated her.

“I’ve read an article in a site that says the advantages of being slender and—“ Rani had not done her sentence but it was so sudden and I felt shocked when Aimee chimed in with,

“Stop that or I will break this glass into pieces!”

“Aimee! Shut up and listen!” I shouted to keep everything calm.

Silence for a while. Since I felt that Farah Quinn watched us, I decided to turn the TV off.

“First, learn to control your emotion. Second, Danendra is not the only man created by God. Third, you have two ears and one lip, so listen first before you comment,” I said.

“Okay. Let me say something for you. There are some advantages for you, when you decide to lose your eighty-five-kilogram fat,” Rani said. Then, she opened her iPad, clicked on Google Chrome, and typed the website she wanted to open.

“Well, this is it. Let me simplify the reasons why men like slim and slender women into three,” Rani started to read what she got from that website loudly. “First, a slim and slender woman is suitable to wear any kinds of cloth she wants, especially when she decides to wear hot pants or miniskirts.”

“That’s not fair,” Aimee said.

“Would you mind listening Rani first and then commenting it?” I said to stop Aimee arguing. Aimee was in silence for a while and pouted her mouth.

“Okay. Let me continue. Being thin and slender will make your relationship hotter.”

“Don’t tell me that it will come to sex,” Aimee.

“Ssshhh!!!” Me.

“Thanks, Arimbi!” Rani thanked me.

“Yeah, more or less, it will come to what you said before as ‘pride’. But, trust me, your relationship will be hotter, more or less. Imagine that muscular and sexy Danendra do a pickaback to you when you don’t want your shoes stepped a muddy ground. Isn’t that cheesy-yet-romantic? You will be spotted by every eye!”

“Okay, Girls. Now, can I speak?” Aimee asked Rani and I.

We nodded our heads with closed eyes.

“You two have mentioned the theory and suggested me to be thin since you are thin and you don’t know me! I’ve tried many kinds of weight-loss program, you name it: carbohydrate diet, mayonise diet, salt diet, palaeolithic diet, and so on. I’ve done that and I’ve been crazy after that on how I make myself slender and thin until I come to this conclusion, motivating myself: a man cannot be in orderly give up with me if he finds that I’m not that perfect as he wants. I can conclude that those things that you’ve uttered are just nonsense!” Aimee said.

“If what we’ve uttered are just nonsense or even bullshit, why did Dan decide to break up with you?” I asked her back and started to give her an understanding. “It was because of the perfection. You need to be perfect to conquer the world. I mean the world of patriarchs. What you should do is to make a revenge for her and make yourself worth to be loved, Darling! Let him regret what he did to you. Did I make myself clear?”

“But how?” Aimee asked us. “Give me a concrete solution. Don’t said diet, going to the gym, or so on. It tortures me so much!”

Rani goggled her eyes like she was shined by an imaginary light bulb. “It is up to you whether you want to do this or not because the key is simple. It is just to control yourself. Once, I watched *The Devil Wears Prada* and find out that Emily had a unique diet that may suit you. She decided not to eat. Yet, whenever she felt that her sight was blurred and she could not balance her body, she would just prepare a box of cheese.”

“A box of cheese?” Aimee started to absorb what Rani said word per word, sentence per sentence in her mind.

“Yeah, a box. Not a slice.”

Aimee sighed for a while. “I don’t know what will happen to me, whether I’ll be slimmer or not, but...” Aimee hugged Rani and I, “Thanks for cheering me up.”

“You’re welcome,” we said together.



Aimee got up from the bed and got out from my room. She closed the door. After there was no sound of her footsteps, I asked Rani, “How’s Emily at the end? I didn’t watch that tale of Andrea Sachs and Miranda Priestly until the end.”

“At the end, she was crashed by a taxi and spent her day in the hospital. At the hospital, she suddenly frustrated knowing that Miranda chose Andy for accompanying her attending an event in Paris. She wreaked all her frustration with eating the carbs served by the hospital and told her envy feeling with Andy, ‘For Christ Sake, you eat carbs!’”

“That’s so evil of you,” I laughed.

“I’m not intending myself to that evil. But, she wants to find a diet which suits her.” Rani looked at me and made a sight, which said I-don’t-want-to-be-blamed-at-all. “You know, she is an inconsistent girl.”



*Dedaunan* was a fancy and minimalist restaurant. The wall was the mixture of white, brown, and leafy-green color in a form of leaf pictures in a white background. We wanted to go there as Rani wanted to tell something as well as having lunch. I ordered Biryani rice with a three pan-fried quails as the side dish, Aimee decided to drink a mineral water since she had put a box of cheese there, and Rani ordered som tum, a Thai spicy salad made of green papaya poured with a dried shrimp.

“Do you think that afraid of being old is a normal one?” Rani scooped her *som tum* and started the conversation.

“I think it’s normal,” Aimee sliced her Kraft and scooped it to her mouth with her fork. “Being old is a sign of being wise, right?”

“Wise man said,” I chimed in and scooped my rice.

“We should be wise in responding this, but why do I feel afraid and thinking things which doesn’t appropriate to be thought by women on my age,” Rani drank her mineral water. “Like buying some anti-aging cream cosmetics, possessed, and hypnotized by those cosmetics and their ads and slowly believed that it will diminish wrinkles in your face.”

“That’s what you should do,” Aimee said and drank her mineral water. “I believe you ask this because last night you screamed like an uncontrollable human. Am I right?”

“Well, sorry if my scream was heard and disturbed y’all last night. But it was a very serious one knowing that I started to have wrinkles in my thirty five. How if the media said that

the woman who was dated by Aristo was not a woman, but a grandma?" Rani expressed her anxiety and then scooped again her som tum.

"I thought the headline on *Hi!*, that gossip tabloid, will be: Aristo dates a grandma. Fulfilled with an exclamation mark, put in the cover page with a big-sized font." Aimee scared Rani and then she laughed. Rani pinched on Aimee's fatty hand.

"Ouch!"

"Stop it!" It was good to know that I'd swallowed and digested my Biryani rice before I talked. "Rani, have you ever thought about going to Thailand, South Korea, or even New York to make yourself twenty five in your thirty five?"

"Some of my friends do so. Even they still look slimmer in their fifties or sixties!" Rani told some of her colleagues, which had the same profession like her, a fashion designer. "You know, fatless hands and hips. They are just gorgeous!"

"I want to talk something to you tonight in your room, Rani..." I asked Rani.

"Am I invited?" Aimee asked us.

"No. It's the company's business," Rani and I said. And then, we looked at each other. Aimee pouted her mouth.

"We've declared that we are friends. One for all, all for one. So, why do you need to hide from me?" Aimee asked at me after she scooped her Kraft.

"Well, sometimes there are things to talk about and you do not need to know about it. How about we talk on your diet progress?" I answered and then asked her about the diet, changing the topic, avoiding from her KEPO—knowing every particular object.

"I thought I will start myself to bring water everywhere I go. I will just have my cheese as a decoration for my cakes in my pastry shop or you can just put it to put on your lasagna or something that needs cheese on it," Aimee declared confidently.

"Great then! You've done a big step!" Rani and I smiled as well as being surprised.

"I also motivated myself by these commandments. I find it effective enough to motivate myself. Along these two weeks, I surfed Tumblr and find some thinspiration from Pinterest," Aimee said cheerfully.

"*Thinspiration?*" Rani and I said and looked at each other.

"Yup! Yup! Yup! Thin inspiration. I find bunch of internet sites, particularly in Tumblr, and pictures, which can motivate me in order to lose my weight. Including this Thin Commandments," Aimee took her white clutch and unzipped it. She took out a paper, which was written by herself.

### The Thin Commandments

1. If you aren't thin, you are not attractive.
2. Being thin is more important than being healthy.
3. You must buy clothes, cut your hair, take laxatives, starve yourself, do anything to make yourself look thinner.
4. Thou shall not eat without being guilty.
5. Thou shall not eat fattening food without punishing oneself afterwards.
6. Thou shall count calories and restrict intake accordingly.
7. What the scale says is more important than anything.
8. Losing weight is good.
9. You can never be too thin.
10. Being thin and not eating are signs of true will power and success.

I read it seriously, and so does Rani. Reading those sentences, I felt that those commandments was just looked like a doctrine, rather than motivating. If this was what Aimee meant of revenge, then, did she mean that she would do the revenge by starving herself in order to look slimmer and slender? Rani and I looked at each other.



### 7.00 P.M.

Let me take a deep breath for a while. I became very exhausted because of two exhausting agendas that I have done today. Well, I should say that this is a 'shooting' day. Right after attending a photoshoot session on *Hi*, a gossip and lifestyle tabloid, I had to catch up the photoshoot for "Bloom", women body spray.

What I wanted to do after finishing those agendas was only to sleep on a very tidy room and clean one. Right after I arrived in my apartment, I asked the receptionist about the room service that I had ordered. She said, "It is finished, *Mbak*."

I sighed my relieved feeling. Therefore, I could just walk to my room. I opened it, and checked everything. It was good to know that the table was clean without dust stuck on it. They mopped the floor cleanly and carefully. I should express my gratitude for the room service in this apartment. Then, I laid myself down on a pillowy bed and closed my eyes for minutes. I feel relieved!

Knock!—Knock!—Knock!

Who was it? I thought I had to complain the landlady since this apartment didn't have any bell to ring. It blurred my thought!

Knock!—Knock!—Knock!



“Yes? Coming as fast as I can!” I walked fast. Who on earth came to my house at seven in the evening?

Aaarrggghhh!!!

I covered my face with both hands.

“Please, Arimbi! Don’t be that tacky!” I thought I knew who spoke like this.

“Is that you, Rani?” I’m still very afraid to uncover my hands. How could I was not that afraid with a girl who wore white and long-sleeve housedress and has a black thing around her face?

“Yes, I am. I’ve just used the charcoal treatment face mask. I’m not baking my face on Aimee’s pan. How could you be afraid of a facial mask?” Rani raised her eyebrows.

“Well, we don’t know what happened in this apartment...” Panting covered all my syllables when I uttered that.

“Please stop your habit watching Annabelle, Valak, and those stuffs. It will make your brain dumber than now,” She came to my room.

“Would you mind watching your words? I’m not that dumb!” I walked following her who stood up beside the window.

“How come do you say that you are not that dull? The fact is: you’ve thought that the one who comes to you was a ghost! Be mindful with that!” Rani defended herself.

“Okay. Okay.” I decided to stop this quarrelling.

“Now, let’s go back to the business. I was interested enough when you talked on Thailand or South Korea. I’m thinking of doing a face-lift surgery,” she said after she sat on my bed.

“I agree with you. May I know the reason you have changed your mind?” I asked her.

“Well, I watched Gong Li in SK II’s advertisement last night,” she started to tell. Talking about SK II, it is a cosmetic developed by Japanese scientists, made from natural ingredients, inspired from the face of *sake* maker, which was ageless. I talked about the maker of traditional Japanese rice wine “I don’t take a big matter on their explanation of what they call as *pitara*, the special fermentation liquid, yet I thought about the jargon: #changedestiny. Was beauty determined someone destiny?” She lifted her shoulders when she asked the question.

Silence came for a while. There, I talked to myself as Momma’s saying when she watched Miss Universe was whirling on my mind.

*They have a magical crown that they will be proud of in their life named beauty.*

That was Momma said, exactly when she saw Miss Universe. I knew what it meant actually; therefore, I tried to say, “Yes. Don’t you think Nadine Chandrawinata, Zivanna Letisha, Whulandary, or even Maria Selenia became *Putri Indonesia*, the famous Indonesian beauty pageant, with a horrible look?”

“At this point, you are true,” Rani stood up from my bed. “Then, what should I do? If it comes to destiny, there will be two things happened: lucky or unlucky. I don’t want my relationship turns to be an unlucky one like what happened to Aimee. You know, what lucky means is that to write a happy ending like Cinderella: happily ever after.”

“You right. So, go back to our business.”

“Which business, Ari?”

“Hello, can I talk with Rani who is actually remembering every single detail? So, if you ask ‘which one’, therefore, do we have too much secret business to do?” I suddenly became an ignited one.

“Well...” Rani suddenly didn’t know what to say. “Relaxed, Darling, although I realized that I am not supposed to be senile in my thirty five.”

I sighed. “I’m sorry. I’m a bit peeved with seniles. I never be advised on seniles.”

“Do you mean those Gangnam, Thailand, and so on?” she asked.

“That’s it!” I shook my bobbylicious hair, as I felt grumpy with Rani.

“I’m sorry, then...” She grinned like a horse, as if she didn’t know that she did something false. “From my point of view, I felt that I have to change my destiny if I still wanted Aristo to be the boy of mine!” Rani winked her left eyes.

I laughed. “So, what will you do?” I asked her.

“What I will do is to have a face-lift surgery. I feel frustrated with those anti-aging creams. They result in none!” Rani said after she sighed a heavy and frustrated feeling with that anti-aging cream.

“If you talk about your frustrated feelings of many anti-aging creams you’ve applied on your face, then, what do you think if I was pissed off when I saw Kim Kardashian’s duckface selfie last night on *Eyeshadow* and Instagram?”

“I thought you’ve been done thinking about how I can have a ripe breast! Yesterday, you were frustrated about it. Now, you are frustrated with your-not-so-sexy-lips. Now, I want to ask you, what happened with you actually?” Rani’s voice was in a high tone, I felt. Here came the frustration to myself.

“Actually, I don’t know why,” I spoke softly like an immaculate child.

“I-don’t-know-why is not a reason!” Strict covered every syllable of Rani’s utterance.

Then, I sighed. “Since I’ve become a model, I thought that everything I have was not *that* perfect... You see,” Suddenly, I walked to the mirror and sit on the chair in front of it. “Look at me. Look at my not-so-ripe breast.”

“I’ve said that. Some contouring will do the boob job!” Rani walked to me and stood behind me. She touched my shoulder and held it gently.

“Well, I’ve tried to contour my boobs, yet my boobs was not *that* ripe when I see it.”

“Really?” Rani goggled her eyes and make an ‘O’ in her mouth.

“Contouring is giving shape to an area of the face and enhancing the facial structure through makeup. That’s what Beau Nelson said. She’s Kristen Stewart’s make-up artist. Therefore, it’s just the appearance. Not big. I think I need Mr. Silicon to help this melons becoming the ripe one!” I said with a frustrated one. “You know what? Those billboards make me like this. If I’m not that perfect for the billboards, I’m afraid that it will affect much on my career!”

“Poor you,” Rani shook her head and pouted her mouth. She said that with a tone as if a person wanted to cry. “Okay. Hope you are interested with the one, which I’ll propose to you. How about I will make us a consultation appointment to my doctor next week?”

“Really? Is he a notable and trusted one?”

“If I didn’t trust him, I won’t make a lipo treatment two years ago. You know I have fatless hips, right?”

“But how about Aimee? I think it will be good if we ask her to go out together. You make our appointment; I make Aimee’s appointment on lipo.” I suggested her.

“Well, starving herself is *enough*,” Rani ogled her eyes when she said ‘enough’. Something was trembling on my heart, yet I did not sure what it was.

Was that uncertainty?

Or else, was that...

... Well, I couldn’t describe what I felt right now.



### **On the next week, 7.00 A.M.**

I woke up on the early morning on purpose from the scheduled time, 10 A.M. Aimee’s room was just two blocks from mine. I tiptoed myself since I started to question Rani’s good

intention to make Aimee slender. Well, I still wanted to make Aimee looked thinner and slender, though.

Knock!—Knock!—Knock!

The door was opened. Yet, ...

“Hi, can I meet Aimee? Does someone abuse you? What happened with you?” I started to be worried with her.

“I’m okay, Arimbi. Trust me, *I’m okay.*”

“What’s okay with these?” I pointed on her plaintive eyes and her lips, which started to be blue.

“I’m fine, Ari. I am fine. Look at me; I’m a bit thinner right?” Aimee asked for my compliment with lifting her hands than make her hands went up and down, showing her body, which looks thinner. I started to be worried about her health.

“You are not fine,” I said strictly with a low voice in front of her face. Yeah, *in front of her face.* “Let me take you to the doctor now.”

“Hey, you said that perfection is everything,” Aimee wanted to clarify, but I heard that her voice started to be weak. My heart started to be wrenched, side-by-side, corner by corner. “Be consequent with what you’ve said weeks ago in my bedroom. I’ve put my effort so much on this and I don’t want to die and becoming a spirit which becomes curious on how to be thin and haunting everyone. Please, do not make me lost my belief in love. I want Dan to stay with me...”

Aimee cried. And, there it was. My heart was trembling. So hard.

“She’s inconsistent, you know. Therefore, I could only recommend what’s good for her, suit what she wants as a girl, right? I think I did right,” Rani said while she was driving her silver Agya after we made an appointment in a beauty hospital with the doctor whom she believed that the doctor could make her looked younger and able to get rid of her wrinkles. She also remembered to make an appointment for me to have a plastic surgery—uhm, sorry, I meant to make my breast more ripe as well as making my lips perfect for selfie.

“Yet, you *must* see Aimee!” I said to Rani and then I tried to portray her condition. “Every time the sun shines, she will get up from her bed and checking whether the fat has been diminished or not.”



“That’s good then,” Rani looked at me. “Mirror motivates woman, anyway. By looking and checking ourselves on the mirror, I think it will make us consider what we should get rid of and what things that will make us look perfect. Thus, we are ready to serve the patriarchs what we want. Right?”

Silence came for a while.

I started to think what Rani said. Well, from the fashion designer point of view, a perfect woman should be the one who is looked nice and not paunchy. It was not only women who should look perfect, but also men. When we open either magazines or social media, we could see that a cloth would look better on those who had a slender body. Imagine when a plump woman or man wears a cloth. Wasn’t that awful? A cloth, which was portrayed cute, started to be curvy and wavy. It would make the cloth was not that beautiful again, I thought. Yet, I thought it was unfair to judge someone based on his or her appearance only. I told you, *it was unfair*. Then, my mind flew to what I asked to Momma before.

*I think we should be grateful with what we have and I think beauty definition is something relative for everyone. Do we have an exact definition or a measurement tool to know how beautiful we are?*

From that thinking, then I asked Rani, “Okay. Mirrors are important. But do you have any definition about what was called beautiful?”

“You’ve said that,” she said while she tried to turn us to find the nearest café for us to have lunch. “You say, beauty means perfection, and I agree with that. Now, why should you rethink?”



1956

Click!

I turned off the lamp in my apartment on purpose. After all those appointment and quarrel in the car with Rani, I wanted to shut those down and made myself ready for the surgery, since the doctor said that he was free tomorrow. I tried to close my eyes.

A minute, two, and three... suddenly my eyes opened.

I tried again.

A minute, two, and three... suddenly my eyes opened. *Again*. For this time, that moment was added with my mind whirling here and there.

*Mirror motivates woman, by the way. With looking and checking ourselves on the mirror, I think it will make us thinking what should be diminished and what things that will make us looks perfect. Therefore, we are ready to serve the patriarchs what we want. Right?*

That was what Rani said to me in the car. In reality, I also checked myself on the mirror, whether I'd applied the eyeshadow right, whether I'd put the lipstick on a right way or not, and other things which needed mirror. Then, I would go out with a full confidence.

But then, before the day when I would get my perfect lips came, I felt my heart was in an uncertainty.

Before the day when I would get my perfect breast came, I felt my brain was whirling, as if I was standing on a sharp edge. I was tossed-around in my own definition of beauty.

I was in a place called: doubt.

Yeah.

Which thing was more horrifying than that?



Knock!—Knock!—Knock!

Someone knocked the door. My eyes were opened. I stretched my body on my bed to release the fatigue in my body.

Knock!—Knock!—Knock!

It was getting louder... louder... and louder. I felt grumpy when I heard that! Yet, my grumpy feeling suddenly changed into something which could make my drowsiness gone quickly!

“Arimbi, it's eight thirty. You know, Jakarta's traffic jam doesn't have any good solution for years. So, be mindful with that!” I knew that. It was Rani who shouted loudly. She didn't think that it would disturb others, yet it was potent to make me realize that I had an appointment with the surgery doctor today.

“Wait! Wait!” I must be hurry for this since I knew that Jakarta didn't have any solution to unravel the big problem since my feet never stepped this glamorous and big city.

“You know, I never tolerate lateness!” she said, still with a shout from outside.



I must thank God that Rani and I didn't need to spend too much time on the street since it was free from the frustrating traffic jam.

We arrived in a quite big beauty hospital. The building was a square one, dominated by white color on the wall. On the top of the building, there was a big purple writing, 'Sarasvati'. This was the beauty hospital where Rani and I made an appointment with the doctor yesterday.

We got out from the car and then I walked to enter the hospital. The door opened automatically. The security asked us to press the button on the queuing machine alternately. Right after that, a paper came out from the machine. That security asked us to wait by sitting on the chair. The queuing number would be portrayed on the screen. We waited for the doctor on the chair, which was designed side by side. I sat right beside Rani and talked about many people who had made appointment with the doctor.

Since we took minutes to be called, we talked to each other; right after Rani took an issue of *Eyeshadow* which was put tidily on a glass-table right beside the queuing chair.

"I'm afraid," I said softly to Rani who opened page by page of the magazine in a relaxed position, as if she had done the surgery many times.

"Why? Relax!" Rani said to me while she flipping the fashion rubric again and again. "Nothing has to be afraid of. The key is just to believe in yourself that you will have a good lips and breast after this. Remember, you should not be afraid of a thing."

I sighed. Yet, the nervous feelings didn't move from the heart. I imagined when a syringe was injected to my lips after the doctor had done the anesthesia. I never knew what kind of liquid or thing which was injected to my mouth. Also, I couldn't imagine about what kind of reaction that my body would react after those unknown stuffs or things had been injected to my mouth. That kind of imagination haunted me, especially thinking on how my breast would be. Would something sharp come to my body, peeling my skin, put something in, injected something to my body, and made my body reacted differently?

Dear God, I wanted to die in a natural condition. *For serious.*

Ring!—Ring!—Ring!

My smartphone was ringing from my white clutch that I'd brought. I unzipped the clutch and found my handphone.

Aimee?

Directly, I stood up. Looking at me, Rani avoided me to go outside the building. "Where do you want to go? Look at the screen, Darling." She pointed on the screen. Three more queuing numbers and I would be ready to face mine.

Ring!—Ring!—Ring!

Ring!—Ring!—Ring!

Ring!—Ring!—Ring!

Without listening to what Rani said, I went out from the queuing room and answered that phone which rang from my clutch. I went to find a place where I could find a wider space so I could talk unimpededly.

Ring!—Ring—Ri—

“Hello?” I answered the phone.

“Is this Ms. Arimbi? I’m the apartment’s security” I heard a male voice.

“Yes. What happened, *Pak*?” I asked him.

“I’m so sorry for this, yet I have to inform it to you. I found Ms. Aimee fainted in the apartment—“

Directly I left the queuing place in order to look what happened to Aimee. My intuition was right. Therefore, I called a taxi driver and got in that blue car. I asked him to go to my apartment directly. As the car was in rush, my mind and my heart was in a turbulence, and so was my mind. I was worried about Aimee. I thought about how pale her face was. I imagined on how her condition looked like.

Although I sighed to relieve and stop the turbulating mind and heart due to thinking on Aimee’s condition, it was no use. My mind and heart kept shaking *so* hard.

When the taxi stopped right in front of my apartment, I gave the driver a hundred thousand rupiahs with no change. I opened the door and ran quickly to find her.

I must save her!

1956

I was in Aimee’s room, accompanied her who had been conscious. It was good to know that she was able to be conscious again after she smelled the aroma of the cajuput oil for many times. I saw she was very spun on the white bed beside me. I sighed, so I could be relieved for a while.

“Where am I? Where am I? Where is the mirror? Do I look more slender? Do I look thinner?” she was sober and she was uttered something as she was shocked.

“You are still in your room, Aimee,” I said gently.

“Do I look more slender? Do I look thinner?” She asked me in a weak voice. I gave her the mini mirror from my clutch.



“Now look at you. You are neither more slender nor thinner. *You have almost killed yourself!*”

“But this is the easiest—“

“Forget about diet, Aimee,” I hold her hands tightly. “Just forget about that. You are right. I wanna confess something to you.”

“Confess about what?” she said that in a weak voice. She started to be weaker and weaker than before.

“Confess about something. There is *no* exact definition on what beauty is. I decided to be grateful for what I have. I should have been known that what Momma said was not that right. We are not freed,” Unconsciously, I said the most honest thing in the world, which came from something deep, inside my heart. That I was not that freed was true. I thought Momma’s definition on beauty was the best one.

“So, you don’t feel frustrated with your boobs and lips?”

“Let me become what I am. I am the most beautiful girl, without thinking how ripe my boobs and lip are. So, start from now, eat whatever you like, as long as it is healthy for you. The one who cannot love a plump girl like you is the most stupid person in this world. He falls in love with the object, not with the subject.”

Aimee got up from her bedroom and hugged me tight with her plump body, the most comfortable body in this world.



“From now on, let’s put the mirror, critics, and ambition to be perfect on our taboo words,” I said on my speech. I was in a bookstore, stood up on a small podium right between two shelves. My books were on the shelves. There, I delivered things, which inspired me to write a book entitled *Fading Flowers*, with my Rizalman Ibrahim’s *baju kurung*. The title of my book was inspired from Yuna’s song, which titled the same. The lyric taught me and make me realized that flowers could be wilted at its time. No beautiful petals. No beautiful lure. And soon, the wilted flower would be stepped by people as he or she walked. And they would not know or care on what they have stepped.

I took a deep breath and looked at everyone who attended the launching of my memoir. “At the first time, I thought beauty will make my life easier and make my career shines bright like a diamond.”

Right at that time, I remembered on what Momma said on how to be beautiful. She said that I had to beautify myself with the cosmetics, which I had, not with Johnson and Johnson. Yet, what I thought was, cosmetic was just inanimate objects, even a woman could make herself beautiful with only pouring a baby powder and pat it on her face. I realized that we lived in a patriarch society, which emphasized on how to be ‘attractive’. It made women compete each other to attract.

“But, there is a time for us to have wrinkles on our face and, it is an imperative that we should not complain everything, including on being old. One more important thing that I should say is that we should not fall in love with the subject. Not about the object. God creates every human with unique things. The main thing is that: we should be grateful.” I smiled, and ended my speech. The audience clapped their hands as my speech ended. I looked Rani—who decided not to cover her red spots in her face because of the surgery malpractice—and Aimee who looked confident with her plump body and showed it with wearing a sleeveless and not-collared red dress stood up.

Minutes later, the book signing was finished and the big space used by the event organizer to launch my book was empty. When Aimee stood right beside me to accompany and help me giving the books I’d signed, suddenly Rani came with a black suede jacket and a stiletto. She walked to us and sighed. Then, she hugged Aimee.

“I am sorry to make you enduring this miserable thing,” Rani said softly to Aimee’s ear.

“That’s okay. I become miserable because of myself who was obsessed to make my boyfriend loves me again,” Aimee smiled. There, not only Aimee who smiled, but also me, who also realized that we were not supposed to be obsessed to achieve something.

Suddenly, my cellphone rang.

*Momma?*

Directly, I answered by pressing the green button.

“Hello?” she greeted me.

“Yes, Mom?” I answered.

“Are you in the book launching right now? I watched the coverage of your book in the infotainment just now,” she said enthusiastically. “I’m so proud of you, Arimbi.”

“Thanks, Momma,” I smiled.

“I’ve watched slightly about what your book is about. I’m so sorry if I have become an annoying one for you. What you tell to the reporters in your book launching makes me realize that nothing is eternal in this world,” she said. Her enthusiasm which covered her saying which

congratulated me on the book launching turned into regret. “Well, am I still look beautiful in my wrinkly and wavy body?”

“Come on, Momma!” I said with a laughter. “You are still my marvelous and beautiful woman. So? What should you worry about?”

“But you’ve said there is no exact definition about beauty?”

“Well, the answer is yes because it is unfair if we judge someone based on his or her look only.”

“Thanks for making me brave in facing my old age. I think I don’t need to have a face-lift operation, botox, or something like that,” she said.

“Well, you don’t need to,” I replied softly.

“Once again, thanks, my daughter,” she thanked me. “Take care.”

The conversation ended. I still waited for my besties who wanted to bought ice cream for us. Minutes later, they came upstairs to give me the strawberry ice cream that they had bought.

“Sorry for being late. So, should we go to the mall and do our window shopping?” Rani asked.

“Of course, yes!” Aimee said. “Finally, I can to eat what I want to eat after my miserable starving days.”

“Me-thinks too. I decide to be brave showing these malpractice red spots,” Rani said while she scooped her vanilla ice cream and ate it.

We walked downstairs. “Therefore, should we break our mirrors and erase out the criticism and perfection from our dictionary?” I asked them.

Rani and Aimee replied together, “Of course, yes!”

We laughed and we walked to the city park which was just right in front of us to eat the ice cream and laughed. The sun was still bright. It shone on us who tried to shone our beauty honestly. Jakarta’s wind breezed smoothly and it made our hearts sparked. That sparkling hearts made us walked.

Happily.

Ever.

After.

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The inspiration for writing this story comes from many readings and sources, both websites and printed sources. Those sources are acknowledged on the 'References' page.





## Reflective Paper

### Introduction

Nowadays, we live in sophisticated era, when people can access information through media easily. One important thing to remember is that media is a powerful tool to shape people's paradigm. When it comes to beauty, what is portrayed by media is a slender woman packed with many characteristics in order to be categorized as beautiful. As the result, the society's mind has been shaped that becoming thin and slender, having sharp nose, and having fair and bright complexion are the characteristics in order to be considered beautiful. This standardization will result in the struggling of *attracting people* and *becoming attractive*. This becomes the first reason on choosing this topic to be written as the story of final project. I want women to be aware with this issue: that when they are thinking or even struggling on how to attract people and how to be an attractive person, they have been oppressed.

The role of media in women's struggle on *attracting people* and *becoming attractive* is obvious. Printed media, electronic media, and even social media accounts give a big contribution in this case. Looking on the boasting and promising headlines on the magazines and television advertisements, it makes women obsessed on becoming like the slender women on the magazines and television advertisements because "the models used in advertisements are sexy and appear to have perfect figures, which suggest to the average woman, that in order to be considered beautiful, she, too, must look like what she sees in ads" (Klein 12).

Not only becoming obsessed on looking like the slender women on the magazines and the television advertisements, the same thing also happens in social media. The ability to filter and criticize every thing comes to our mind is an imperative to have. Yet, some women prefer to fulfill the beauty standard which has been made by society rather than becoming free on deciding their own definition on beauty from using fashionable clothes or even with extreme ways, such as starving herself. This is my second reason on choosing this topic to be written as the story. It is to engage women to against the domination of patriarchy by making them knowing their own definition of beauty.

This writing will also remind readers to become a critical-minded person. It is to criticize and filter everything comes to mind. From those three aims of my writing and reflecting on some women nowadays, I want to write about an oppressed person by the beauty standard who eventually realized that they misunderstand the definition on beauty.

### **The Learning Process on How the Oppression Happens**

When we talk about beauty, it should become a relative thing to be talked, since every person has its own definition on becoming beautiful. What happens in the reality is that “the body is not a ‘being,’ but a variable boundary, a surface whose permeability is politically regulated.” (Butler 177). In other words, the reality says that the body is not supposed to be an absolute thing. Butler’s statement stimulates me on what makes body becomes a politicized thing which results in the ironical things happened in the story. In order to know how the body is politicized, I have to do a research. Doing a library study is the best way to answer the question.

First, I have to learn on what is beauty myth in order to give me a foundation in understanding the phenomena which I am going to write in the story. Since learning from Naomi Wolf’s *Beauty Myth* is a time-consuming, I decide to find the shortcut by learning about beauty myth from Powerpoint slides. I find that Powerpoint slides are easier for me in order to provide an understanding on what beauty myth is. The same method is done when I want to learn about gender representation in media. After I have got an understanding on beauty myth and gender representation on media, I have to learn on ‘how does the media oppress women?’ Powerpoint slides is not the proper source for me in learning and finding the answer of my question. Therefore, I should read academic papers.

At first, I did not like reading academic papers since some of them are presented in a complicated way. Nevertheless, I felt thankful that the papers I chose for learning and finding the answer of my question is presented with a simple language and able to open my mind in finding the answer of the research question so that it changes my mind that reading academic papers is a fun activity. The papers that I choose to read are Kendyl M. Klein’s paper titled “Why Don’t I Look Like Her? The Impact of Social Media on Female Body Image” and Ann Marie Britton’s “The Beauty Industry’s Influence on Women in Society”.

It turns out; reading papers help me to grow in understanding the real background of the problem which I am going to write in this final project. Not only growing me up on the understanding on the real background of the problem I choose as the topic, reading papers also giving me some new concepts which I haven’t known before. For instance, now I know that there is a correlation between self-monitoring, self-esteem, and body image. The correlation is that: *the more someone does self-monitoring, the lower the self-esteem that someone has because (s)he may have negative body image.* The main cause of this bad relationship is

anxiety, which may come from beauty advertisements, peer pressure, or innate feelings (Britton 11).

Besides discovering new concepts, reading academic papers also help me to know the phenomena. The phenomena which I have discovered from Klein's paper is that there is a thing called 'thinspiration'. That unique word is defined as "any form of media, print, online, pictures, vidos, etc. that are utilized in an unhealthy manner to promote continued weight loss" (Klein 10). This 'thinspiration' is the main cause of two kinds of eating disorder, *anorexia nervosa* and *bulimia nervosa*. The differences between those two eating disorders are also shown in the paper, as well as the symptoms. Nonetheless, I decide not to use them since I do not have any anorexic or bulimic friends to interview in order to know how it feels as well as portraying the reality.

After discovering the concepts from Powerpoint slides and academic papers, I think it will be useful if I learn how media oppress women from the real source. I read magazines and see how media oppresses women on becoming beautiful by photos, advertisements, and rubrics presented in those two magazines in such a way so that it sends a message: *in order to look beautiful, you should wear and have these things in order to be considered as beautiful*. Besides reading, I watch a cosmetic advertisement and a cooking show titled "Ala Chef", Farah Quinn's debut cooking show as well as looking at some social accounts on the Instagram. Watching and reading the 'oppressing sources' helps me better to portray the reality in my story. Besides helping me on portraying the story, seeing and watching 'oppressing sources' will help me knowing the concepts portrayed in PowerPoint slides and academic papers more.

### The Writing Process

This part portrays my struggle in writing the final project. At first, I thought that by reading novels and reading some theories on Creative Writing are enough for me to do the writing process for this final project. Yet, the reality says a big no for it.

The first struggle on writing my final project is plotting. Plotting is an essential part in building the story. A plot contains a "logical interaction of the various thematic elements of a text which lead to a change of original situation as presented at the outset of the narrative" (Klarer 15). In Final Project Proposal, it was fixed that I would write this story using episodic plot, a plot, which consists of "loosely related events" (Chen). Yet, I did not put this on my mind that I will write a twenty-to-twenty five pages short story. At first, I thought that episodic plot is the most suitable plot in writing the answer. Yet, after reading the synopsis of "The Hours", the film which supervisor recommended me to watch in order to know the episodic

plot, I found that writing story with an episodic plot was difficult. The difficult thing in writing the story using episodic plot was that finding the relation between event A, event B, and event C and it should have a line. As the result, I decided to use progressive plot and I find myself easier in constructing the story.

The next struggle is to show, not to tell. This technique is important in order to make the reader feel bored with our story. Realizing the fact that I write the story using the first-person point of view, I should balance the show and tell. What I should keep in mind about 'showing' is that I should show "what happens through actions and reactions of your characters" (Ramet 69). What I should tell is no other than the character's voice and thinking.

For this showing technique, I use the five senses in order to stimulate and steering readers' imagination. The problem is, at the same time, I have to dig deeper on what becomes my main character's thinking and voice in this story. As the result, the struggle is not only to show-don't-tell, but also to balance between show and tell. Knowing that I have a trouble in describing something and I always use telling rather than showing, then I should read some sources in order to make myself able to show things with the five senses as well as digging the voice of the character(s).

I gain the inspiration from Isman H. Suryaman's novel titled *Oksimoron*. This novel is a perfect exemplary for me in order to learn showing-not-telling. Through the novel, I have learned that using onomatopoeia is powerful enough to describe some actions. Rather than writing 'The door is knocked.', it is better to write 'Knock! Knock! Knock' in the story. I find using onomatopoeia makes things simpler and able to reduce unimportant sentences. Besides that, Isman's ability to describe also becoming my reference. For example, I learn how to give actions to the characters when saying something. Furthermore, I also learn how to describe things in detail from reading *Oksimoron*.

The other sources which helps me to gain the voice of the character(s), especially in the stories using the first-person point of view was Nh. Dini's books. Some of Nh. Dini's books use first-person point of view. After reading Nh. Dini's books, I have learned that by knowing the main problem of the story, I can explore the voice of the character(s) in my story. I thank my examiner, Suzana Maria Luki Astuti Fajarini, M.Hum., who lend me Nh. Dini's books.

Talking about problems in the story, the next struggle, which is building the conflict, becomes the most difficult part that I must face in this writing process. Since I focus more on the minor details of the story, therefore, the conflict is not built well. Here, I learn that too many explanations on unnecessary things will make the story unfocused. Besides too many explanations on unnecessary things which makes the story unfocused, the cause of why



building conflict is not difficult is because there is no plan on plotting about the person who opposes Arimbi. Besides deciding who versus who, what I do not plan well at the plotting stage was what the problem of the story is.

To solve this, I should look back at the plot in order to fix up the plot, including who versus who and the main problem at the story. Then, I decide to make Momma (Arimbi's mother) as the source of the conflict, specifically on Momma's idea on the beauty. After knowing the source of the conflict, then I work more on this by adjusting the character and the plot. Here, I have learned that settling the conflicting characters and settling the main problem of the story are the things needed for the story since the story will taste plain if there is no conflict. I need more time working on this conflict since I have to formulate what kind of friction which suits this story since good and logical friction will make the story better.

Facing writing process is not that easy. I should face many obstacles, learn from theories, learn from the novels, and learn from the gain-and-loss that I have been through.

### **Conclusion**

My writing explores on the oppression on women because of beauty standards. In order to write the story, I should face two kinds of process: learning process and writing process, which teach me to be determine and to consider every single detail, which will happen in the story. I hope my story will liberate and inspire women to choose their beauty definition.

## LOGBOOK

Name : Christian Paskah Pardamean Situmorang						
Std. Number : 392013003						
Project Title : Beauty and the City						
Date	Activities	Progress	Problems	Advisor's Suggestion	Advisor's Signature	Student's Signature
May 12, 2017	Reading Adele Ramet's <i>Creative Writing</i> and deciding what kind of plot I will use to write the story.	Constructing the plot using episodic plot.	It is impossible to write the story using episodic plot as I will write a twenty to twenty five pages of short story.	To know more on episodic plot, I should watch "The Hours".		
May 19, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read the synopsis of "The Hours" in order to know slightly how episodic plot works in a story.</li> <li>Reading PowerPoint slides on beauty myth and gender representation in</li> </ul>	Revising the plot.	There are some ambiguous words and missing details when I construct the plot. Furthermore, the plot is complicated and difficult to	Do not use ambiguous words in constructing the plot. Remember in mind that plot is a cause-and-effect		

	media.		understand.	relationship.	
<p>June 9, 2017</p>	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adele Ramet's <i>Creative Writing</i></li> <li>• "The Beauty Industry's Influence on Women in Society" by Ann Marie Britton</li> <li>• "Why Don't I Look Like Her? The Impact of Social Media on Female Body Image" by Kendyl M. Klein</li> <li>• Reading what are the advantages of having a slender body for woman in Detik Health.</li> </ul>	<p>After reading some academic articles and sources on beauty myth as well as creative writing sources, I revise the plot and make the plot simpler and easier to understand.</p>	<p>It is difficult to make the plot simpler and easier to understand since I still want to use episodic plot in writing the story. Then, I remember that this is a twenty-to-twenty-five pages of short story, therefore I decide to use progressive plot instead of episodic plot.</p>	<p>Handwritten signature: <i>[Signature]</i></p>	<p>Handwritten signature: <i>[Signature]</i></p>
<p>June 16, 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watching "Sex and the City", both the series and the movies in order to make the narration and the story having "spice"</li> </ul>	<p>Writing the first draft of the story.</p>	<p>It is not easy to narrate the story and make the story 'lively' and not making the readers</p>	<p>Show-don't-tell is the way to make the story 'lively' because too much telling</p>	<p>Handwritten signature: <i>[Signature]</i></p>

in it.	bored.	will make the readers bored. To show, use the five senses. It is also important to pay attention in how to make a good sentence since, either it is short or long, there must be something hidden in it.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading <i>Oksimoron</i>, an Indonesian novel written by Isman H. Suryaman as the example to apply the show-don't-tell theory.</li> <li>Reading <i>Kemayoran</i>, a book written by Nh. Dini in order to know how to</li> </ul>	<p>Second draft: Revising the story and applying the show-don't-tell by using the five senses.</p>	<p>The way I revise the story seems like I will change the plot. Furthermore, I've put too much detail on the flashback part</p>	<p>Still, there are some parts which shows 'retelling'. A flashback should not be too detail. Therefore, delete some unnecessary</p>	<p>July 5, 2017</p>



	dig the characters' voice deeper.		which makes this part too long.	scenes.	
July 11, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-reading "Why Don't I Look Like Her? The Impact of Social Media on Female Body Image" by Kendyl M. Klein to know more on <i>anorexia nervosa</i> and other sources on this topic.</li> <li>Watching "The Devil Wears Prada".</li> </ul>	Revise the second draft and write the third draft.	<p>It is difficult to delete some unnecessary scenes in the flashback part. For some scenes which must not be deleted, I decide to shorten the sentence.</p>	Be careful of retelling.	
July 14, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Watching SK II's advertisement on YouTube and surfing SK II's website.</li> <li>Reading some fashion magazines in order to learn on how the media oppresses women.</li> </ul>	Revise the second draft and write the third draft.	-	Rewrite the description on Soleram and Suriram, the twins in the story.	
July 18, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading some articles from the internet in order</li> </ul>	Revise the third draft and write the	-	Be mindful on writing the story.	

	to be able giving information on the minor details in the story.	fourth draft.	Don't let the imagination make the story illogical. Think about your conflict since it doesn't constructed well. Cut some unnecessary parts.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Watching "Ala Chef" critically, especially on what kind of cloth that Farah Quinn uses.</li> </ul>			
July 25, 2017	Re-read the outline to see which scenes that should be removed.	Revising the fourth draft and writing the fifth draft.	It is still hard to decide which scenes that should be removed. There is no ups and downs in the story.	Look at your outline to see which one that should be added.
July 28, 2017	Again, I re-read the outline to see which scenes that should be removed and put. Besides that, I re-read the story and	Revising the fifth draft and writing the sixth draft.	Continue writing the story.	

	put some 'spice' in the dialogue.						
August 1, 2017	Revising the draft and the dialogue based on the cultural context of the story.	Revising the sixth draft and writing the seventh draft.	The advisor still cannot find what problems that Arimbi face.	The advisor gives me two suggestion on the conflict. And, cut the unnecessary details.			
August 4, 2017	Looking at the sixth draft and cut the unnecessary details based on the story.	Revising the seventh draft and writing the eighth draft.	-	Check the cultural context since the dialogue is too vulgar, if I use Indonesian context. Mind your grammar and mechanical things.			
August 8, 2017	Checking the cultural context on the story and checking the grammatical errors and	Revising the eighth draft and writing the ninth draft.	-	Continue writing the story.			

August 23, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look at the plot (outline) and thinking what kind of ending suits the story.</li> </ul>	Revising the tenth draft and writing the eleventh draft.	At first, I found that it was difficult to find a suitable ending. Then, I thought I will end the story with making Momma realized that beauty is not eternal.	awkward.		
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## Acknowledgement

I am unable to finish this final project without the blessing and guidance from Jesus Christ. I thank Him for His unstoppable blessings, which kneads and shapes me well to face happy and tough times. I am ready to be Your vessel.

Thanks for my loving parents, Mr. Polman Situmorang and Mrs. Lamria Roma Uly Marbun, for their motivation and encouragement given to me along this final project writing. Now, I know that your motivation, moral and financial support, encouragement, and even your scoldings, are functioned as a track, which makes me remember on the responsibility that I should do. To my beloved sister, Christabella Naomi Situmorang, I always love you and always learn to be your perfect *Abang*. I also thank my big families, both Situmorang and Marbun, for your unstoppable loving, motivation, advices, and suggestions for me along my time studying in Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana.

I also thank my supervisor, Deta Maria Sri Dart, M. Hum., for your guidance, which shapes me well as a good student and, later, a good writer along the writing process of final project writing. You have taught me how to be a disciplined writer as well as controlling my ego because those are basic things, which will be useful for my future. Next, for my beloved examiner, Suzana Maria Luki Astuti Fajarini, M. Hum. Thanks for your inputs, critical suggestions, and references along the writing process.

I express my gratitude for my academic advisor, Ervin Suryaningsih, M. Hum., for your guidance, advices, and suggestions along my study time in my beloved faculty. I am also grateful for the presence of great lecturers in English Literature Department, which enriching me with their knowledge: Erio Rahardian Pamungkas FanggidaE, M. Hum., Anna Sriastuti, M. Hum., Purwanti Kusumaningtyas, M. Hum., Lany Kristono, M. Hum., Esriaty Sega Kendenan, M. Hum., (The Late) Fera Nugroho, Vica Ananta Kusuma, M. A., and Jonathan Brooks Moore. I will not forget what I have got in this faculty and your fruitful knowledge.

The next thing, I want to show my gratefulness to my friends in Faculty of Language and Arts. First, I thank for the presence of *Sastra Inggris* 2013, especially the Creative Writers, which gives me support that always makes me cheered up in my merry and sorrow. Second, I want to thank Dyah Ayu Larasati (2015), Agnes Yustin Roswita, Kezia Melva Hartono, and Tirza Tubalawony (2015) for your stimulus, supports, and fruitful talks given for me along this final project writing process. Next, I thank Juneth Nelvia Wattimena, Christy Febianty Lekahena, Mariyorie Anastasya Tuhumena, Abraham Christover Manuputty, Sthella Dina Rahankoly, Reynaldi Siwalette, Mega Marthine Saimima, Febrilien Matresya Titahena, Raisa

Aldora Latuny, Natasya Sipahelut, Natalya Sipahelut, Olivia Isabela Tuhumena, and Johannes Latuny for a big lesson in my life: *friendship without expectations*.

For my newest family: *Poetry Planet Salatiga*. Terus berkarya, tetap jaya! Thanks for giving me inspirations to write, write, and write. Thanks for your presence.

The last but not least, for my squad in Kemiri Candi no. 65, my beloved boarding house, either the newest, the elders, and/or the exes. Every time I see you, I see home, not other things. Thanks for becoming my home along my four-year studying time in Salatiga.

My little brother from another mother, Wilfridus Adyatma Putranto, I want to ask you a question: why do you came when I want to do a farewell?

To wrap up, as Raja Kobat tells in his “*Serampang Bugis*” for Noraniza Idris:

*Kala mengarung lautan dalam,  
pantang menoleh kampung halaman.  
Alang-alang nyeluk pekasam,  
biarlah sampai ke pangkal lengan.*

Keep smile, be grateful, and do not give up!

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